

during this recession were much greater for men than women, women have fared worse than men in recent months. And this has had real consequences for women's health care coverage: in the last 6 months, the number of women losing health insurance benefits due to their own job losses has increased by nearly 50 percent. Over one quarter, 28 percent of women ages 19–24 have no health insurance at all. Part of that number is likely explained by the economic challenges facing young women. Young women have been hit hard in the recession, facing an unemployment rate of 13.1 percent, significantly higher than the national rate of 9.7 percent, and making it less likely that they will have job-based coverage. Health care reform will help us to overcome inequities at the center of the current system—where women pay more than men for the same coverage, or even, where women who are not smokers pay more for coverage than men who are smokers. My report and the reality is that the current health care system is serving women poorly, the recession has made the situation worse, and now more than ever, we need health care reform.

I have been a strong supporter of the public option and voted for the House bill in large part because it contained a public option. I believed then and I believe now that a public insurance option will increase competition and reform our current system. Every day, 14,000 Americans lose their health care coverage. A public option would have brought down costs and expanded access. Unfortunately, the Senate was unable to pass a bill with a public option, though many Senators supported the provision. While I am disappointed that the final bill that will go to the President for signature will not include it, I feel confident that the end product will achieve the goals of covering the vast majority of Americans, reduce health care costs, and reduce our deficit by trillions of dollars.

Madam Speaker, it is clear that the Senate bill had flaws and as passed was not as good of a bill for the State of New York as it should have been. If I was just casting one vote today, it would be a no vote on this bill. However, we are being given the opportunity to fix and improve the Senate bill with the upcoming reconciliation bill which is why I am able to vote in favor of this bill. With this vote, I am voting in favor of helping Americans gain affordable, quality health care they both need and deserve, I am voting in favor of dramatically reducing the Federal deficit by \$143 billion in the first 10 years, and I am voting in favor of improving coverage by removing denials of coverage based on preexisting conditions or gender. I am voting in favor of a strong and healthy future for all Americans and for our great country.

EXPRESSING SYMPATHY TO THE PEOPLE OF POLAND

SPEECH OF

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 14, 2010

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, I stand here today to join my Polish American constituents, the Polish nation, and the world in mourning those who perished in this week-end's tragic plane crash.

The crash that killed President Lech Kaczynski of Poland, First Lady Maria Kaczynski, and many ranking military and civilian officers was aptly described by one paper as "literally, a nation colliding with its past." The 97 aboard the plane were traveling to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Katyn massacre in Western Russia. Shrouded in secrecy, the events that took place in Katyn had long been concealed or denied. These events included a massacre of 20,000 Polish prisoners of war, killed and discarded in unmarked graves by Soviet secret police in 1940. But, many anticipated that the commemorative events scheduled to take place for the anniversary would be a positive step forward, a warming between countries.

One of my constituents, Wojciech Seweryn, no doubt held a wish for such a reception, and was aboard the plane on his way to participate. A Polish artist and influential member of Chicago's Polish community, Mr. Seweryn's father died at Katyn and Seweryn himself spearheaded the construction of a memorial to the event at a cemetery in Niles, Illinois. Seweryn was on hand last year when the monument was dedicated, as he was at many important events in the Chicago area's strong Polish community. Poles in Chicago make up the largest ethnically Polish population of any city outside of Poland, second only to Warsaw, the capital of Poland. The Polish American community will undoubtedly struggle to fill the void left by Mr. Seweryn and all those lost a few short days ago.

This loss of Polish leadership included a President hailed as a distinguished leader dedicated to advancing the ideals of democracy and freedom. President Kaczynski supported democracy movements in Ukraine and Georgia. He tirelessly advocated for shedding light on painful moments in Poland's past. It is therefore incredibly sad that his life, and the lives of so many other distinguished leaders, were claimed in the dark forest outside Smolensk, Russia, this past weekend.

Poland is a true friend and ally of the United States. Our two nations just recently celebrated 90 years of diplomatic relations. The contributions of Polish Americans to the United States are numerous. From the families who lost loved ones in the plane crash, to the nation of Poland, to Chicago's own shaken Polish American community, this loss will be felt around the world for years to come. We will stand with our friends as they find the resilience to emerge stronger, as they have before, following this unimaginable tragedy. As Adam Michnik, an intellectual imprisoned six times by the former puppet-Soviet Communist rulers, said: ". . . in my sadness I am optimistic because Putin's strong and wise declaration has opened a new phase in Polish-Russian relations, and because we Poles are showing we can be responsible and stable." I look forward to Poland's recovery, and re-emergence as a country that can, and will, overcome.

HONORING DR. BENJAMIN L.
HOOKS

HON. MARCIA L. FUDGE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 15, 2010

Ms. FUDGE. Madam Speaker, this morning, Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks—civil rights leader,

minister, scholar, and attorney—passed away. With great sorrow, I extend my condolences and sympathy to his family and friends.

Dr. Hooks was a champion of minorities and the poor, who raised the stature of the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People in his 15 years as executive director (1977–1992). He repositioned the organization to increase its national prominence and added thousands of new members.

A staunch advocate of self-help among the Black community, who urged wealthy and middle-class Blacks to give time and resources to those less fortunate, Dr. Hooks once stated, "It's time today to bring it out of the closet. No longer can we proffer polite, explicable, reasons why Black America cannot do more for itself. I'm calling for a moratorium on excuses. I challenge Black America today, all of us, to set aside our alibis." His challenge powerfully resonated throughout the NAACP and, in turn, impacted the Black community.

Throughout his life, Dr. Hooks continued his advocacy and focused on opening channels of dialogue among all races and classes in America. Upon retirement he served as a professor and later returned to preaching.

In honor of a man who dedicated his life to the service of others, I encourage each of us to remember Dr. Benjamin Hooks great contributions to our Nation.

MIDDLE CLASS TAX RELIEF

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 15, 2010

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, it has been a little over a year since this Congress approved, and the President signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

As we are set to finish tax season this week, the Middle Class is continuing to see the positive impacts from this bill and other significant pieces of legislation.

95 percent of families have already received immediate and sustained tax relief with the Making Work Pay Tax Cut.

First-time homebuyers were able to take advantage of significant tax benefits—benefits that have now been increased and expanded.

The Recovery Act also provided up to \$2,500 in tax credits to help 4 million students go to college.

We have also provided tremendous relief to small businesses struggling to stay afloat in these tough economic times.

The Recovery Act cut the capital gains tax on investors who buy and hold small business stock over 5 years which incentivizes investments in America's small businesses.

We also offered tax credits to companies that hire recently discharged and unemployed veterans and young adults who are having trouble finding work.

This relief wasn't limited to the Recovery Act.

Last month, we passed the most sweeping healthcare reform package since the 1960s.

This provides 40 million families with incomes up to \$88,000 with tax credits to help pay for healthcare.

It also provides \$40 billion in tax credits for 4 million American small businesses.